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September/October 2009

American Girl

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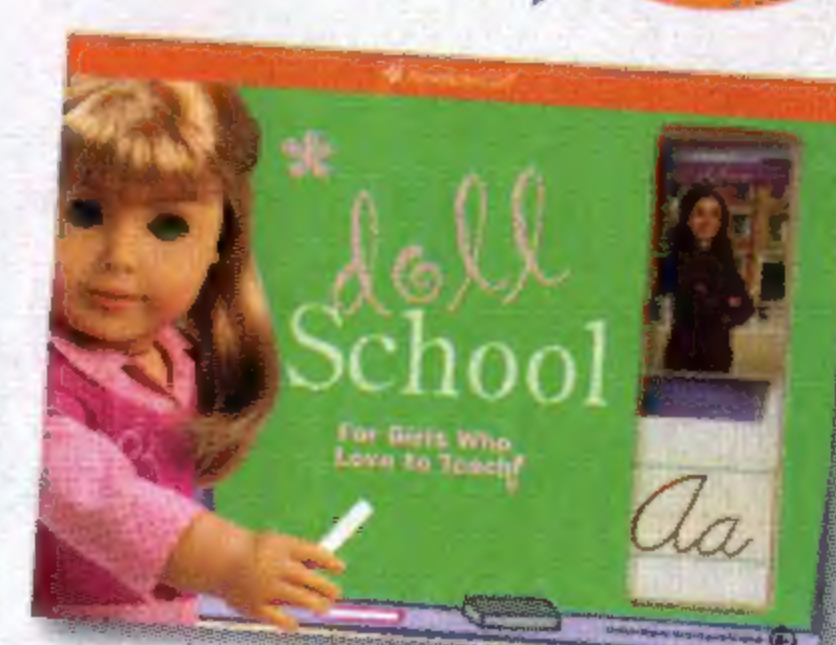
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Plus AG's Spooky Stickers

WIN IT!

Win a copy of *Spa Fun* and a copy of *Doll School*. To enter, send
a postcard by October 16, 2009, with your first and last name and
address to:

Win It!—S/O 2009
American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Official Rules

1. Employees of American Girl and its affiliates and their families are not eligible.
2. Only one entry per family.
3. To be valid, all entries must be received by mail by October 16, 2009. Entries may not be faxed or e-mailed.
A parent or guardian must sign the entry.
4. One winner will be chosen at random.
5. All entries become the property of American Girl and will not be returned.
6. Void where prohibited by law.

No purchase necessary.

Girls

E X P R E S S

Bags and Tags

Use travel gear from your summer vacation to help keep your school stuff organized in your locker.

Hang It

A hanging travel kit will keep your school supplies in order—plus, the clear plastic pockets let you see everything.

Tag It

Cute, colorful luggage tags can hold important info such as schedules, checklists, reminders, or phone numbers.

Zip It

Use small zippered cosmetic bags to contain little things you need—just grab and go.

Band: small towel, braces guard, lip balm

Lunch: extra lunch money, dental floss, emergency granola bar

Gym: comb, elastics, socks, combination lock, sunscreen



Meet an AG Reader

Brenna D.

Age 11, Virginia



I live with my mom and dad and our cat, who is named Cash.

In my free time I like to read and do crafts, cook and play video games. I also like to work on my Web site—it's all about pie.

Something people wouldn't guess about me (OK, they'd probably guess): I LOVE pie, so much. I even have a purse that's shaped like a pie.

I can't live without my colored pencils.

A time I laughed so hard that I could hardly breathe: I once made a video of myself sneezing and then showed it to my friend. It was funny.

My favorite funny word: goulash. It means stew, and you say it like this: GOO-lawsh.

In 20 years, I'll be a famous chef in Paris. I'll cook the best food.

My favorite part of AG: I like the crafts—fun to make and easy.

Introduce Yourself

To find out how you could be a featured reader, go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Start the fun."

Shining Star



Mimi A. wants to do all she can to help homeless animals.

Every month, the 13-year-old helps to deliver bag after heavy bag of pet food to an animal shelter near her home in Oregon. "There are tens of thousands of dogs and cats in animal shelters across the country, all needing to be fed a good meal," Mimi says.

But where does she get all that food? Last year, Mimi played an online game that donated food to a world hunger program for each question that a player answered correctly. Thinking that she could use the idea to help feed homeless animals, Mimi got help from her parents and started two Web sites—one to help feed dogs, and the other to feed cats.

Both of Mimi's sites feature a daily trivia question. When a player answers the question—right or wrong—a pet-food company donates ten pieces of food. That might not sound like much, but it adds up fast! So far, Mimi's Web site has generated one million meals for dogs and cats living at shelters around the United States, including Mimi's local shelter!

"I love seeing the shelves in the storage rooms fill up," Mimi says. "It's great to be able to feed homeless dogs and cats."



How Do You Shine?


AG readers are great at helping others. Your efforts could make you our next Shining Star. In the past, we have featured:

- * a girl who makes and sells jewelry to benefit different charities,
- * a girl whose family volunteers to raise and train rescued kittens,
- * a girl who donated her hair to a program that makes wigs for kids who need them, and
- * a girl who tutors homeless children and also organizes donation drives.

Tell us how you're **helping**. We want to hear about how you **volunteer**, raise money, solve problems, or simply make your school or community a **happier** place. Send your story and a photo to the address on page 7.

Reader Recipe

Bethany's Apple Treat

 Ask an adult to peel and chop 1 apple and put the pieces into a small bowl. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon brown sugar over the apple pieces and ask an adult to microwave for 90 seconds. If the apple pieces haven't softened, microwave for another 30 seconds. If you'd like, add a marshmallow on top of the apples for the last few seconds of cooking. Let cool before eating.



Bethany S.

Age 12, Illinois

Bethany's tip: "It's great with a small scoop of vanilla ice cream!"

Send your yummy—and easy—recipes to the address on page 7.



AG's Back-to-School Survival Guide

How to Remember Your Locker Combo



1. Write your locker combo on a piece of paper and look at it.
2. Make up a funny chant by adding words to the numbers. Let's say that your combo is 34-21-07. Your locker chant could be: "34 cats chase 21 dogs, 7 days a week."
3. Sing that to yourself 20 times. It should stick in your head.
4. If you still have trouble remembering, write your chant on a piece of paper to keep with you. If someone were to read "34 cats chase 21 dogs, 7 days a week," she would NEVER know it was your locker combo!

How to Find Someone to Sit With (in the Cafeteria or Wherever)

1. Look for a face you recognize—anyone will do. If you don't know anyone, look for another person who is sitting alone.
2. Take a deep breath, walk right up to the person, and say, "Hi! May I sit with you today?" Don't forget to smile.
3. She is very likely to say yes, so you've got a place to sit and a person to talk to. Tomorrow, you can easily sit with her again or make plans to sit with others. Either way, you're covered. If she says no, try someone else.



How to Ace Your School Photo

Thanks to these readers for sending their school photos to us!



Madison P.
Age 9, Iowa



Cristina C.
Age 10, Florida



Anna Grace B.
Age 9, Tennessee

1. Avoid wearing clothes with wild patterns. Your face should be the focus in the photo, not your outfit.
2. Wear your hair down or partially pulled back. Ponytails aren't always flattering in photos.
3. Holding a smile for the camera can be tough. Try giggling to make your grin look natural.

True Story

Johnetta buys and sells in the stock market—with real money.



Dear American Girl,

In first grade, I started learning about economics—that's the study of the way goods are made, sold, and bought. At my school, each incoming class gets \$20,000. The money is put into an account for the class until we reach sixth grade. Then we elect a group of students from our school to research and form opinions about stocks. The junior board—of which I'm a member—makes decisions on what stocks to buy or sell with the money in our class account.

Buying stock is like buying a piece of a company. Depending on how well the company does and what's happening in the world, the stock's value goes up or down. When our stocks do well, we make money for the class. And when the stocks aren't doing great, we'll lose money. When we graduate, whatever profit we have made gets split. Half the profit is donated to a good cause, and the other half is given out to the graduates.

Being on the junior board has taught me a lot about the way the world works. And it's fun, too. At the end of the year, the teachers throw a party for us. We eat pizza and—you guessed it—talk about stocks.

Sincerely,

Johnetta M.

Age 13, Illinois

Smart Saving

What's the best way to cling to your cash?
These girls shared their best saving tips.

"When I want to buy something, I ask myself: *Will I wear or use that? Do I own something like it? Do I absolutely love it? Can I get it cheaper somewhere else?* By asking lots of questions, I usually convince myself that I don't need the item after all."

-Ollie

"Get two jars—one for spending, one for saving. Put half of your allowance into one jar and the other half into the other jar. You'll have money to spend right away, so you won't be as tempted to spend your savings."

-Charlotte



Cut out card. Flip over for directions.



Answer these questions, and then turn the page to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

What do you do right after school?

- * watch TV
- * have a snack
- * play on the computer
- * do homework

What's your favorite piece of clothing?

- * cute tank top
- * pretty dress
- * pair of jeans
- * comfy T-shirt or sweatshirt

Flip to the back cover of a **notebook** (the cardboard). Use a **hole punch** to make a hole in the top corner and the bottom corner. Close the notebook, and string a piece of **elastic cording** (found at fabric stores) around the front of the book and through the two holes in the back cover. Tie the cord into a double knot at the back of the notebook. Use a **Glue Dot** to attach an **appliqué** to the front of the elastic cording.

★ American Girl

AG Poll

What girls told us at

americangirlmagazine.com:



After school, girls say they:

50%

have a snack

26%

do homework

14%

play on the computer

10%

watch TV

For favorite clothing, girls like:

41%

a pair of jeans

21%

a pretty dress

19%

a comfy T-shirt or sweatshirt

19%

a cute tank top

To answer our weekly poll question, go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Fun for Girls."

Are You Superstitious?

Do you believe everything you've heard about what brings luck—both good and bad? Take this quiz!



1. You're walking to school. About how many cracks in the sidewalk have you stepped on?
 - a. Um, how should I know? Am I supposed to be counting the cracks or something?
 - b. NONE. You know what happens when people step on cracks!



3. You and your friend say exactly the same phrase at exactly the same time. You
 - a. laugh—isn't it funny how that happens sometimes?
 - b. immediately blurt out "Jinx!"

Answers

If you answered mostly **a's**, you're not superstitious. Sometimes you'll play along with a superstition just for fun, but you don't truly believe in it.



2. Your team is on a winning streak. That's because
 - a. everybody has started to play really well together.
 - b. I secretly haven't washed my game jersey since the first win in the streak.



4. You have an important test today. What's in your pocket?
 - a. a list of vocab words to review at lunch
 - b. my notes and a four-leaf-clover key chain—plus, I'm wearing my lucky undies

If you answered mostly **b's**, you're superstitious. You believe what you hear about luck, even if it isn't logical. Just remember: the best "luck" comes from hard work and trying your best.



AG Art Gallery

Our covers were the inspiration for this reader artwork.

Help us fill our gallery! Send color copies of your original **artwork** or **photos** to the address below. Sorry, we can't return entries.



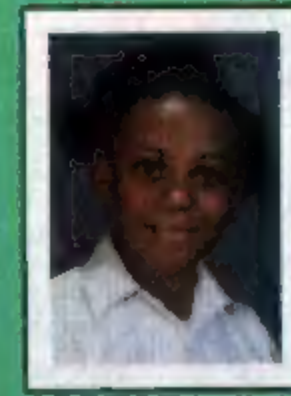
Shea D.
Age 11, Illinois



Lizzy R.
Age 12, Georgia



Whitney K.
Age 10, New York



Nadia W.
Age 11, Florida

Short & Sweet

Make someone's day with a small act of kindness.

Put yourself in charge of gathering coupons for family grocery trips. Find them in most Sunday newspapers and in packets and flyers that come in the mail. You also could ask a parent

to help you check store or product Web sites for special offers. Organize the coupons in an envelope, and see how much money you can save on your family's next shopping trip.

Super Coupon Clipper



Courtney D. says, "Your parents will be happy when you pull out coupons to help save money!"

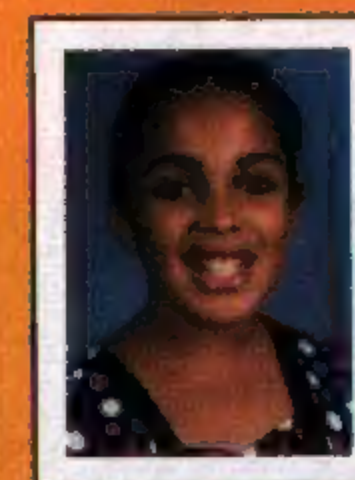


Write to Us!

Be sure to include your ...

- * first and last name
- * birth date, including year
- * address and phone number
- * school photo or snapshot

We can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon! ★



Envelope art by
Sydney R.
Age 10, Illinois

Send us a cool envelope! Print our address neatly on the front and your return address on the back.

Hilarious Hair

These girls created some of the silliest hairstyles we've ever seen!
Here are their hair-raising photos.



Playful Pigtails

Stephanie M.
Age 12, Ohio



Lofty Locks

Caitlin H.
Age 12, Arkansas



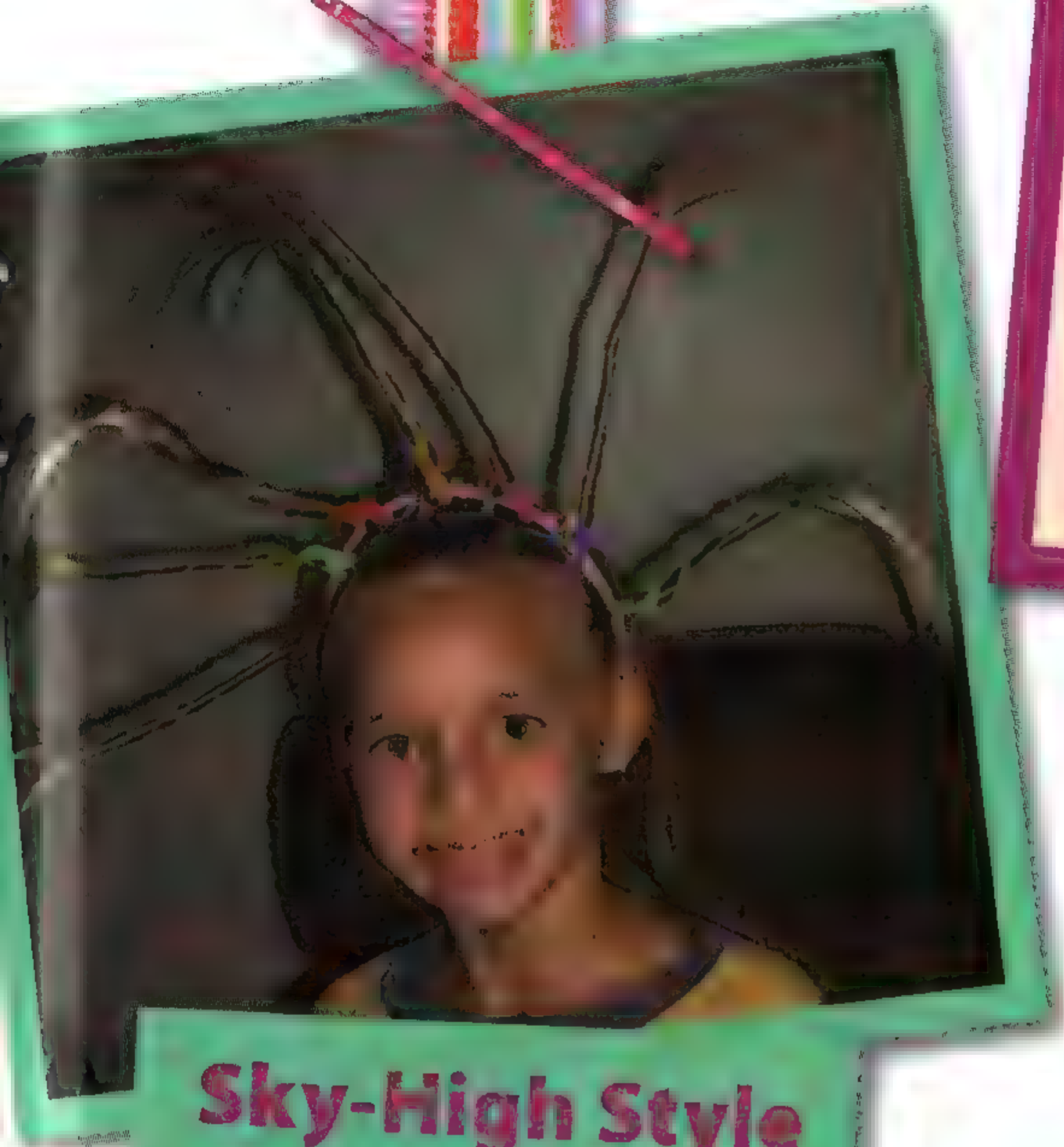
Busy Barrettes

MiKayla K.
Age 10, California



Fun Feathers

Jordan M.
Age 7, New York



Sky-High Style

Timber H.
Age 9, Colorado



Fabulous Flowers

Katie B.
Age 10, Ohio



Bold Braids

Fiona K.
Age 8, New York



Tricky Twists

Sophie G.
Age 10, Nebraska



Green Goal

Kelly Ann L.
Age 10, New Jersey



Heartfelt Hairdo

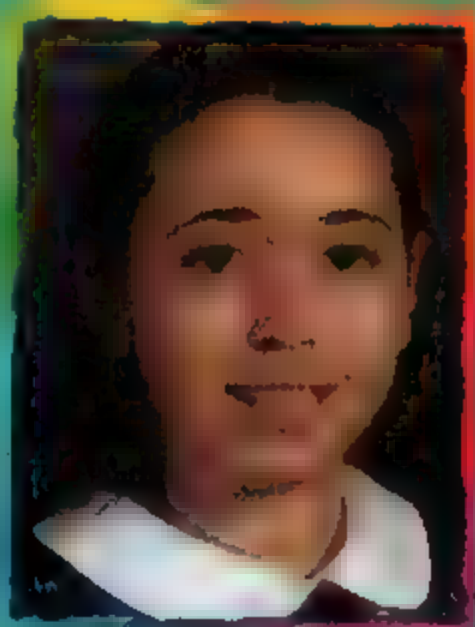
Starling M.
Age 8, New York

New Contest: Fantasy Flowers

Create a never-before-seen flower! Maybe your flower would have polka dots on its petals. Perhaps your flower would have a piece of candy for its center. Or, your flower might display a color combination that can't be found in nature. Draw a unique flower and send it to the address on page 7, along with your first and last name, address, school photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: October 10, 2009. Winners will appear in the March/April 2010 issue. Sorry, we can't return entries.

Dress Codes

These girls share their feelings about dress codes and how they show their style while still following the rules.

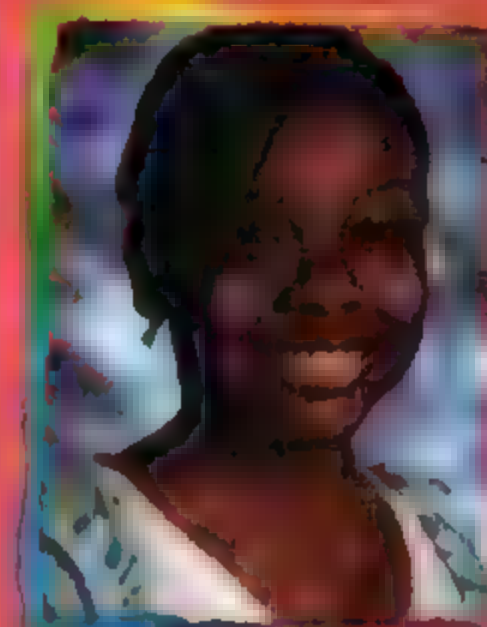


I go to a school that has a very strict dress code, so my way of expressing myself is with my hair. Every day,

I come to school with fun hairstyles such as pigtails, ponytails, braids, or curls. I wear eye-catching clips and headbands, too.

Jackeline P.

Age 10, New York



Our dress code says that we can't wear spaghetti

straps or short skirts on their own. So, when I want to wear a shirt that has spaghetti straps, I wear a cute, short-sleeved top underneath it. When I wear a skirt, I wear colorful leggings underneath. When you layer clothes, you can put together a pretty awesome outfit!

Hannah C.

Age 12, North Carolina



We have to wear plain, collared shirts at my

school. I love to wear brightly colored patterns, so I wear patterned camisoles underneath my collared shirts. That way, I can wear patterns without breaking my school's rules.

Abby M.

Age 11, Massachusetts



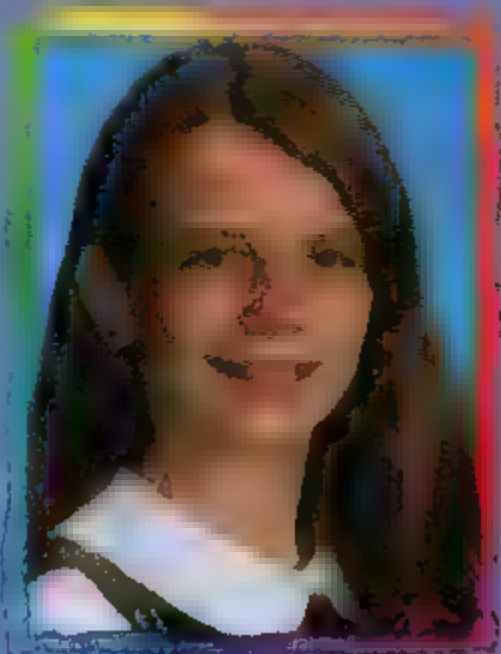
I wear a uniform, and I think that a uniform is a

great equalizer because people can't be judged by their clothes. Wearing a uniform means that you are dressed nicely and you can focus on your schoolwork without distractions.

Eva S.

Age 11, Idaho



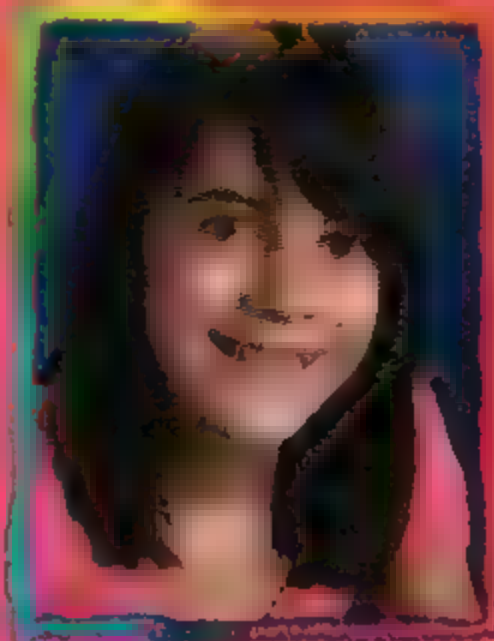


My school has a dress code, but my friends and I show our

personal style by carrying cute, colorful backpacks and decorating our folders with stickers. It's a really great way for each of us to show our personalities.

Katie N.

Age 11, New Jersey



To make the best of wearing a school uniform while

staying within the rules, I add lots of fun touches, such as belts and bright knee-high socks. Even if you have to wear a uniform, you can still create your own look with accessories that you love.

Gianna P.

Age 11, Arizona



Big Truth

**What can you wear anywhere?
A smile!**



At first, I didn't like my uniform, but then I

noticed that I didn't have to wake up early in the morning to choose an outfit, which used to take me forever. Dressing is so much easier.

Emily L.

Age 10, California



Some people like dress codes, and some people

don't like dress codes. If you have a dress code or have to wear a uniform, just remember that every girl is unique, no matter what she wears!

Katie B.

Age 12, California

We need your help!

In the March/April 2010 issue, you will see some big changes in our "Heart to Heart" department! We are asking you to send in questions for other girls to answer. For example, 13-year-old Susanna wants to be a marine biologist when she grows up because she wants to help animals. She wants to know, "What do you want to be when you grow up, and why?"

Send your answers to Susanna's question (and your own questions!) to the address on page 7.

Postmark deadline:

October 10, 2009. Some answers will appear in the March/April 2010 issue. ★





I Don't Let It Stop Me

Meet five girls who stand up to the
challenges that life hands them.

Facing a rare blood disease has made Sydney determined to help find a cure.

About two years ago, my mom noticed that one side of my face was swollen. So the doctor ordered a lot of tests and discovered that I have a disease that causes my blood cells to act in a way that's not normal, and that's what caused the swelling. The disease is called *Langerhans cell histiocytosis* (hiss-tee-oh-sy-TOE-sis). It's not cancer, but doctors have figured out that it can be treated with some of the same medicines. I started *chemotherapy* right away, which meant that I had strong medicine injected into my body every week.

That was a hard time for me. I was scared and unhappy, and the medicines I was taking made me feel tired, achy, and sometimes cranky. I missed school every time I went in for treatment. But that's when my necklace project really took off.

Before I got sick, I had been making necklaces out of rocks that I'd found while walking on the beach. I used to sell the necklaces and keep all the money for myself. But I realized that I could use these necklaces to raise money to research my disease. If scientists knew more about it, they could come up with better treatments. By raising money, I'd be helping other kids like me.

I get help from friends and family to make the necklaces, and we've made a lot of them. Necklace sales already have raised more than \$52,000 for research, and every penny represents another step closer to a cure.

Thanks to the treatment, I don't have symptoms of my disease



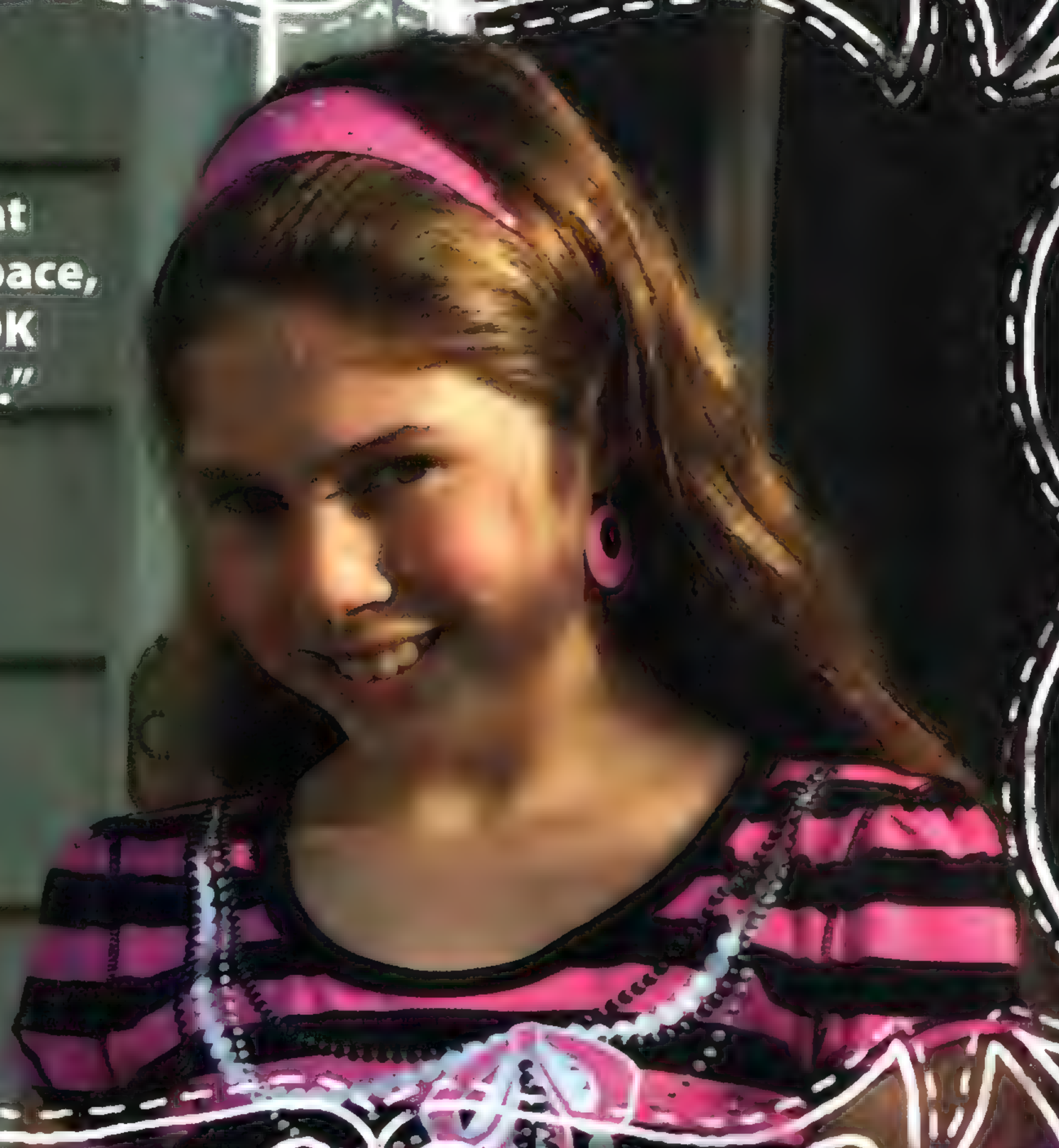
**"I just keep
my head up
and focus on
what I can
do to help
others."**

Sydney M.

Age 12

anymore. I get a few checkups a year, and the longer I go without the disease coming back, the more likely it is that it won't ever reappear.

I try not to think about it too much, though—I just keep my head up and focus on what I can do to help others, one necklace at a time.



**"I just go at
my own pace,
and I'm OK
with that."**

Aly R.

Age 11

Her learning disability can be frustrating, but it only makes Aly work that much harder.

In first grade, I wasn't doing all that well in school. The teachers talked to my mom about getting me a little extra help, and that's when I started going to special classes in school to deal with what my mom and I call my "glitch." It just means that I don't learn the same way as other people do and that some kinds of schoolwork are harder for me than they are for others.

One strange thing about this glitch is that a lot of the time, I don't even know that it's happening. I'll write something in school, and then when

I check it, I'll find all kinds of mistakes. For example, I mix up my b's and d's a lot. I feel as if I'm writing a b, but I actually write a d. When I see that, I think, *How did I get that all wrong?*

So you can see how that makes school difficult for me. When I was younger, some people would give me a hard time. They'd tease me about leaving my regular class to go see a different teacher, or they'd say that the work I was doing was so much easier than everyone else's. But these days, most people say, "Hey, she's got a learning disability. How can I help

her?" Most of the time I know the answers—I just need someone to help me talk it out. It's usually easier for me to figure out the answers by saying things out loud than working them out on paper.

I try not to get frustrated. Sometimes I feel as if I have to work so much harder than the other kids—for example, if we get a math worksheet, and I hear people saying, "Oh, this is so easy. I'm already done," and I'm still only on question two. I just go at my own pace, and I'm OK with that. I don't let this glitch overpower me.

Hearing aids have helped Grace, and she wants other kids to be able to have them, too.

When I was a baby, my parents found out that my hearing wasn't good. I got my first pair of hearing aids when I was three months old, and I've worn them ever since. Hearing aids don't make my hearing perfect—they make all sounds louder, not just the sounds I want to hear. So I hear the car engine or the refrigerator as loudly as the voice of the person speaking to me. I've worked hard to learn how to concentrate on the important sounds and ignore the rest of the noise.

I don't let my hearing loss get in my way. I take dance lessons, and I do

gymnastics and cheerleading. I'm the only person at my school who wears hearing aids, and sometimes kids in other classes will stare. But I usually don't pay attention to that. Lots of times I forget that I'm even wearing hearing aids, but they're important to me. I got them so that I could grow up knowing how to speak. It's hard to learn to speak if you don't know what words sound like.

Still, not all kids who experience hearing loss are able to get hearing aids. Hearing aids cost a lot of money, and many insurance companies won't pay for them. Most insurance plans

will pay for glasses and wheelchairs, but hearing aids are important, too.

When my mom found out about the insurance companies, she started asking our state lawmakers to write a law that would make insurance companies pay for hearing aids for kids. When I got older, I helped her. My mom and I spent a lot of time at our state capitol, trying to convince lawmakers that this law was a good idea. It took a lot of work, but finally last year, the law passed—and it was named after me! The law will help kids in my state get the hearing aids they need. I feel so proud about that.



**"Lots of times
I forget that I'm
even wearing
hearing aids."**

Grace L.

Age 10

Losing her hair was awful, but the experience made Meghan stronger than ever.

My parents noticed a little bald spot on my head when I was about two. Doctors said that I might have been born with a disease that makes people's hair fall out. The disease is called *alopecia areata* (al-oh-PEE-shuh ar-ee-AH-tuh). The hair grew back, though, and then nothing happened for a long time. But when I was in fourth grade, my hair started falling out again. This time, though, it wasn't just a small patch.

My hair went little by little. At first, I lost the hair on the back of my head. The rest of my hair was long, so it covered up the patches. But then

I started losing the rest, and I got permission from the principal to wear a hat to school. I could cover up, but it wasn't as if I could hide what was going on. People stared at me, and some even called me names. I didn't want to get out of bed in the mornings. I was late to school often, and I cried a lot.

In reality, more people were supportive of me than mean to me, but I needed to figure out how to be happier on my own. One day, I turned my attitude around. I was on a field trip. My head was hot under my hat, so I finally decided to take the hat off. And you know what? No one cared.

From that day on, I was fine. I became friends with some girls that day because they didn't think my bald head was a big deal. Another time, when some guys at the police station where my dad works said that I looked cool bald, I even started to believe it.

My hair started growing back about a year ago. It's still short, but it's coming back. This is a strange disease—I could have hair for the rest of my life, or it could fall out again tomorrow. But it won't be so bad if it happens again. I won't cry. I'll just pout for a day and then get over it, because I like who I am.



2008

"I needed to figure out how to be happier on my own."

Meghan B.

Age 12



**"Once I knew
what I needed to
do, it wasn't a
big deal."**

Alexis M.

Age 9



Having diabetes has changed Alexis's life, but it hasn't dimmed her spirit.

My mom noticed that something was wrong when I started getting so thirsty. I'd have a lot to drink before bed, which was unusual for me. One time, I opened a big container of apple juice and kept refilling my glass. Before I knew it, I'd drunk the entire container! My mom called my doctor, and we went in right away. I had a few blood tests, and the results were certain—I had *diabetes* (die-uh-BEE-tis).

Here's what my type of diabetes is: An organ in your body called the *pancreas* makes a chemical called *insulin*. Insulin helps you to digest

food by breaking down its sugars. My pancreas had stopped working, which meant that the amount of sugar in my blood was very high. That can be dangerous, so I had to learn how to control my blood-sugar level.

My eating habits had to change in a big way. With diabetes, I can't eat a lot of sugar or *carbohydrates*, which are natural sugars found in foods such as bread and pasta. I have to figure out exactly how much sugar or how many carbs I plan to eat, and then I get an injection of insulin before the meal to help my body process the food. Also, I test my blood-sugar level often. I'm always

trying to keep my blood sugar in a healthy range. The level can drop when I exercise, but that doesn't keep me out of gym class or off the basketball court—I just keep some juice boxes around to boost my blood sugar if I need to.

It's a lot of work—and not a lot of fun—to keep track of everything, but I've gotten used to my new habits. I was a little scared at first because I wasn't sure how my life would change. Once I knew what I needed to do, though, it wasn't a big deal. My life is different now than it was before, but it has become completely regular to me. ★

Sweet Sneaks

Give your shoes a new look with these removable decorations!

Directions

Turn your shoes into a walking work of art! First place one piece of a VELCRO BRAND® adhesive hook-and-loop fastener (available at fabric stores) on your shoe. Then place the other piece on the back of your embellishment. Make a few embellishments so you can change the look of your shoe every day. Try one of these ideas on a pair of shoes:



Bitty Bows

Stack a few ribbons and tie a knot in the center, then tie the stack into a bow. Trim the ends so that no ribbons hang over your shoes.

Fake Flower

A fabric flower scrapbook sticker or appliqué will make your feet look sweet. Make a bouquet of embellishments for every day of the week.





Spell It Out

Use chipboard scrapbook lettering to spell out a word or your initials. Create a new three-letter combination every day.



Simple Stickers

Show off your top four favorite things with a few epoxy stickers. Change them as many times as your favorite things change!

Adorable Appliqués

A pretty patch adds a punch of color to a plain pair of shoes. Change the decoration every season!



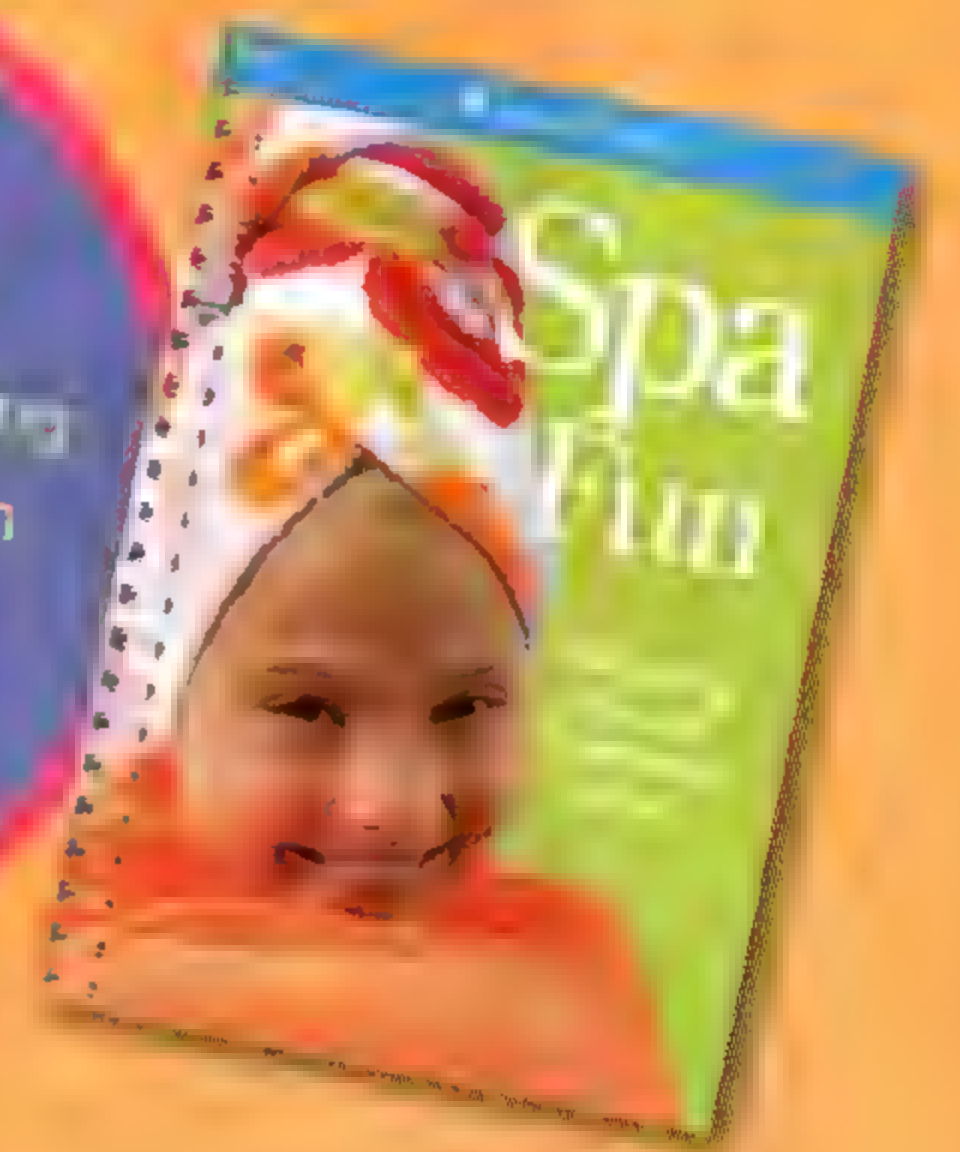
Irresistible Rhinestones

Your toes will sparkle with different-colored rhinestones. Change the colors every day.
Be creative! ★



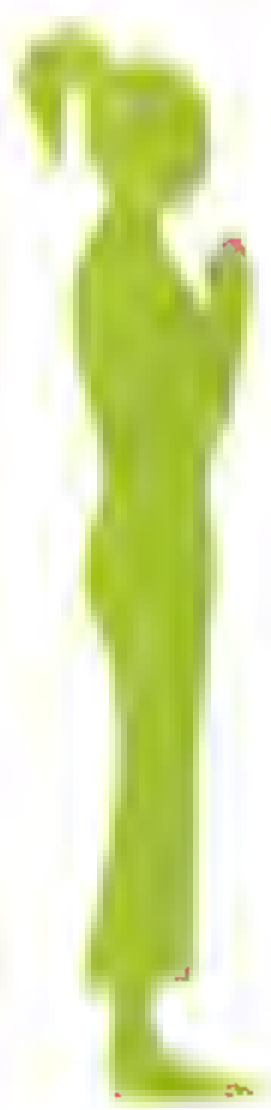
Good Morning!

Use our simple tips to revive your body and say good-bye to stress.



Rise and Shine

Greet the day and energize your body with the first few poses of yoga's Sun Salutation.



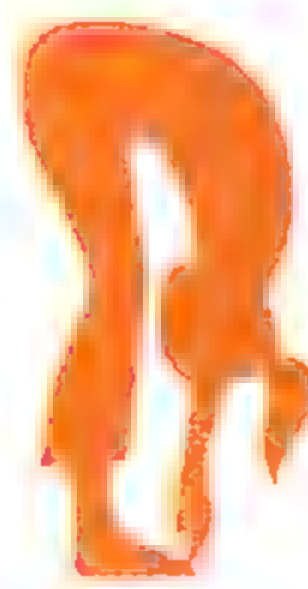
1.

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your hands pressed together at your chest (as if you're praying).



2.

As you breathe in, sweep your arms out to the side and overhead. Lean backward slightly, and look toward the sky.



3.

As you breathe out, bend over and try to touch your toes, bending your knees as much as you need to.



4.

Breathe in, and bring your body up slowly with your arms out to the sides. Bring your arms overhead again and look up.



5.

Breathe out, and slowly lower your hands back to your chest (palms together). Repeat several times.

Good Night!

A Pillow for Your Eyes

Lie in bed for a few minutes with a lavender pillow over your eyes. Don't have one?

Make one. Here's how:

1.

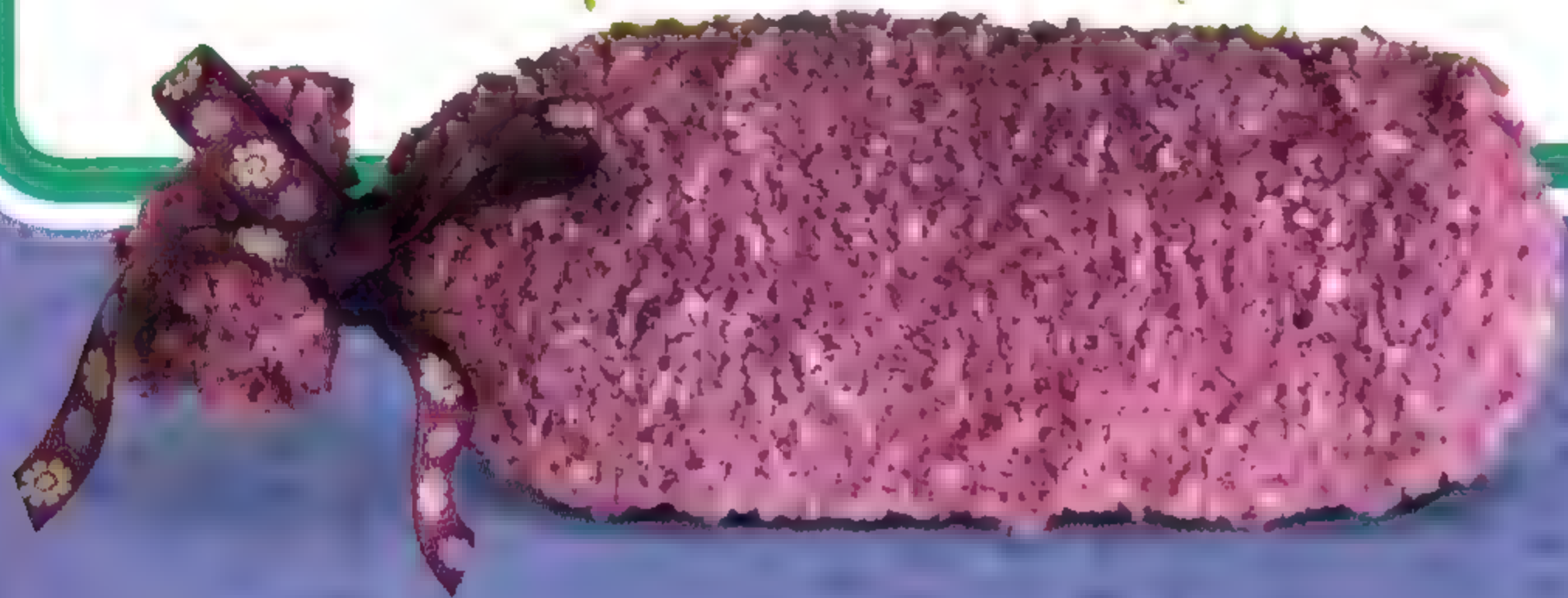
In a tall cup, mix 1 cup of uncooked rice with 2 tablespoons of dried lavender (found at health-food stores).

2.

Stretch the end of a soft cotton sock over the mouth of the cup. Turn the cup upside down to fill the sock with the rice mixture.

3.

Tie a ribbon tightly around the sock's opening. Lay the eye pillow over your eyes, and relax.



A Soothing Routine



After a warm shower or before putting on pj's, slick on a sweet-smelling lotion. Try rose or lavender. Then sip some chamomile tea (pronounced CAM-oh-meel).

Muscle Melt



Calm down your breathing. As you lie on your back in bed, clench your toes for five seconds, and then release. Work your way up your body, tensing and releasing the muscles in your legs, stomach, arms, hands, and even face. Then scan your body from head to toe. Is there any tension left, or are you ready to drift off?

Now you should be set for a sound sleep. After a sound sleep, you'll be ready for a great day. ★



Halloween Head to Toe

Show your Halloween spirit with these funny fashion ideas!

Eerie Eyeballs

I've got my eyes on you! Attach googly eyes to a pair of stud earring blanks (found in the jewelry aisle of craft stores) with Glue Dots. Or use Glue Dots to attach lots of googly eyes to a pair of old sunglasses.

Haunted Hairdo

Fill your hair with creepy spiders or bats. Separate your hair into two pigtails, and secure each side with a hair elastic. Add two more hair elastics to each side. Cover each hair elastic with a plastic Halloween ring.

Tip: Make the plastic rings extra-spooky—and sparkly—by brushing glitter glue onto the rings. Let them dry overnight before putting them into your hair.





Boo-tiful Bracelets

Turn chenille stems into fuzzy jewelry. Hold the ends of 2 chenille stems in one hand and use your other hand to twist the stems around each other. Now, bend the bracelet into a hoop. Overlap the stems by 1 inch on each side. Twist stems around each other, making sure the pointy ends are tucked under. Now, slip on your wrist!



Spooky Sock Buddies

Stuck with one mismatched sock? Turn it into a Halloween decoration! Fill the foot of an old sock with uncooked rice. Wrap a rubber band tightly around the middle of the sock to prevent the rice from spilling. Trim the leftover material. Set your buddy down so that the rubber band is hidden. Cut shapes from felt to make a face. Use fabric glue to attach the shapes and googly eyes to your buddy. Let dry.



Halloween Tote

It's a hoot! Carry this tote for homework—then use it for candy. Cut out felt shapes (similar to the ones at left) and attach them to a tote bag with fabric glue.



Eyeball Accessories

Googly eyes make an outfit instantly spooky! For rings, use Glue Dots to attach googly eyes to old rings. To make a belt, use Glue Dots to attach about 10 googly eyes to a piece of ribbon that is long enough to tie loosely around your waist. Leave the ends of the ribbon plain so that you can tie them in a bow.



Critter Cuff

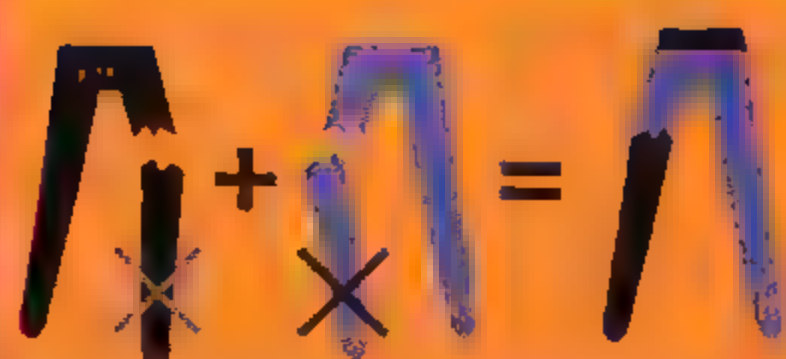
Cut a strip of felt about 9 inches long and 2 inches wide. Set aside. Cut a small animal out of felt. Carefully cut details from felt and attach to the animal with fabric glue. Glue the completed animal to the center of your felt strip. Let dry. Attach VELCRO BRAND® adhesive hook-and-loop fasteners to each end of the bracelet (one on the front of the felt strip and one on the back of the felt strip).



Spellbound Stockings

Turn two pairs of colorful tights into one mismatched masterpiece! With a parent's permission, cut the right leg off one pair of tights and set it aside. Cut the left leg off another pair of tights and set it aside. Now put on both tights—one at a time. Poof! Two different colors!

Stockings
How-To



Creepy Kicks

The craft on pages 18-19 can be perfect for Halloween. Use Halloween-themed ribbon, appliqués, or plastic bugs to make your feet look frightful.



Hair-Raising Headbands

Put together a simple getup with one of these headband crafts:

Cat: Twist one end of a black chenille stem around the middle left side of a headband. Form a triangle by folding the stem in half and twisting the other end around the headband. Repeat on the middle right side of the headband. Now attach a smaller triangle made from a purple chenille stem within the triangles. Place on head carefully.

Alien: Twist one end of a chenille stem around the top of a headband. Shape the rest of the stem so that it looks like a zig zag. Use a Glue Dot to attach a large googly eye to the end of the chenille stem. Repeat 4 more times. Place on head carefully.



Ghostly Gloves

You won't get chills when you're wearing a pair of these spirited gloves. Carefully cut off the fingertips of a pair of stretchy knit gloves. Do not wear the gloves while you do this. Use sparkly fabric paint to paint a spiderweb on the back of the gloves. Let dry overnight. Now, slip on your gloves and have a happy Halloween! ★

Alien Headband





Write On

Find a paragraph of your regular handwriting. Use it as your **handwriting sample**, and answer these questions.

Some people think that the way you write can reveal your personality. Take this fun quiz to see if you agree.




1 Do you dot your i's with circles?

- a. yes 
- b. no 

What it might mean:

- a. You love being the star of the show! You're usually comfortable with performing or doing presentations.
- b. When it comes to fashion, you're not one to follow all of the trends. You just wear what feels right.

2 Look at the way you've crossed your lowercase t's. Are the bars

- a. low? 
- b. high? 
- c. flying away? 

What it might mean:


- a. You sometimes forget how great you really are.
- b. You set really high goals and tend to push yourself.
- c. You often find yourself staring out the window or daydreaming.

3 How big are your letters?

- a. tiny
- b. average
- c. pretty big

What it might mean:

- a. You tend to notice the tiniest details, and you probably are good at math and science.
- b. You like to learn the rules—and follow them.
- c. You have a lot of interests, which sometimes can distract you from what you're doing.

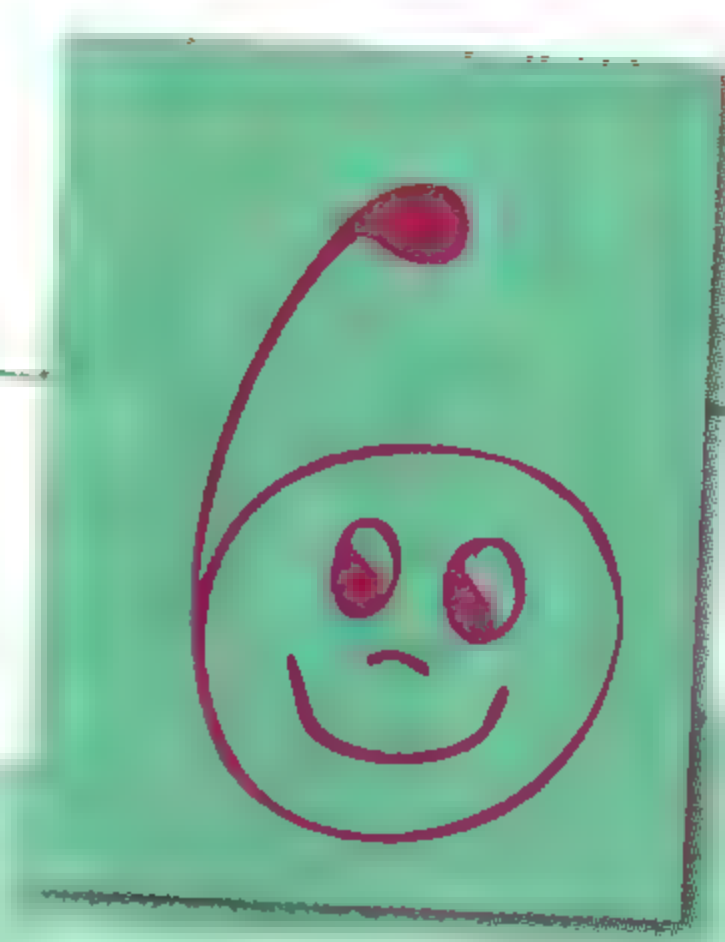


How hard do you press
when you write?

- a. hard
- b. medium
- c. not hard at all

What it might mean:

- a. Admit it: you can be stubborn sometimes. You work hard, though.
- b. You know how to get your way, but you're never pushy or rude about it.
- c. You're gentle, relaxed, and easy to get along with.




Which way do your
letters slant?

- a. to the left
- b. to the right
- c. they don't slant

What it might mean:

- a. You probably feel a little bit shy sometimes. But you're great at keeping others' secrets.
- b. You tend to be outgoing and friendly, but you can be impatient sometimes, too.
- c. You know how to think for yourself, and you make good decisions easily.



Where do you dot your lowercase i?

- a. a little to the right of the i
- b. directly above the i
- c. very close to the i

What it might mean:

- a. You're a quick thinker, and you like to finish your work at lightning speed.
- b. Perfection! You crave it.
- c. Your secrets are safe—you rarely tell people what's on your mind.

What do you think?

Do you agree with the answers?
Can handwriting really show someone's
personality? Try this quiz on a friend,
and then talk about your answers
and hers. **Happy handwriting!** ★



Contest Winners

Last January, we invited you to write a story that was titled "The Dress Disaster." From the more than 1,200 entries, we picked these two winners!



The Dress Disaster

by Cary H.

Alicia is wearing a beautiful dress to the talent show—but not in the way she thought she would.

My little brother, James, and I were walking home from school one Friday afternoon, our sneakers crunching the newly fallen leaves. The cool October breeze felt so nice.

"Are you excited for Tuesday, Alicia?" asked James, breaking the silence.

"Yes, but I'm also nervous," I said. On Tuesday, I would be playing my violin at the talent show at my school. It seemed as if James was more excited about the show than I was. I had just started playing the violin two months

ago. That's why I was nervous. Also, all the boys in my sixth-grade class are immature, so if I messed up, they would tease me forever.

When we got to our house, I stuck my key in the lock and gave it a twist. James sprinted into the house, dropping his backpack on the kitchen floor with a thump.

"James! For the last time, you can't drop your bag in the middle of the floor and leave it there. Mom almost tripped on it when she was cooking. Remember?" I yelled.

James grabbed his backpack and ran to his



room. I heard the door open, and Mom walked in with two grocery bags and a yellow bag with pink flowers on it. Dad came in behind her with one more bag.

"You guys beat us home. When did you get here?" asked Mom.

"We got here just a minute ago," I said.

"You both should go up and get started on your homework," said Dad. "You can have a snack first if you want. Then later, your mother and I want to talk to you about something."

I grabbed an apple and dragged my backpack up to my room. When I got there, I went straight to the phone and called my best friend, Olivia.

"Hello?" said Olivia.

"Hey, Olivia, it's Alicia."

"Hi, Alicia. What's up?"

"Nothing, really. Are you excited for the talent show on Tuesday?" I asked.

"Just nervous. I can't even sing that well," said Olivia.

"Yes, you can! You're the best singer I know," I exclaimed. I added, "I am so nervous to play my violin."

"Do you want to come over to my house to have a sleepover and practice for the talent show?" said Olivia.

"Thanks, Olivia," I said.

"Anytime," Olivia said back.

I was just finishing up my homework when I heard Mom call my name. I put aside my math assignment and went downstairs. When I got to the bottom of the stairs, I saw Mom smiling and holding the yellow bag with pink flowers on it.

"We got a new dress for you to wear to the talent show!" Mom said.

Mom handed me the bag, and I gave her a big smile. I opened the bag and removed the tissue paper to reveal the most beautiful dress I'd ever seen. It was a violet dress with glitter and sequins all over it, and it had spaghetti straps.

"Mom, thank you so much!" I exclaimed. "It's so pretty!"

"I'm glad you like it," Mom said.

I ran to my room to try on the dress. It looked beautiful! It was just a little long, so Mom said she'd hem it for me and hung it up in the sewing room. I couldn't wait to wear my dress for the talent show.





The next morning, the telephone rang. It was Olivia. She asked if we could have a sleepover that night and work on our acts for the talent show together. Mom said I could go, so I got my stuff ready. Around six o'clock, Mom drove me to Olivia's house.

"Hey!" said Olivia when she saw me at the door.

"Hi!" I answered. I was carrying a bag and my violin.

"Let's go up to my room," said Olivia.

We walked up the stairs to her room, and I put down my stuff. I laid my sleeping bag on the floor, next to hers. We worked on our acts together and laughed and had fun. Then we had dinner and played games until we went to bed.

On Sunday morning, Mom picked me up and drove me home. I ran up to my room to put my stuff away. Then I went into Mom's sewing room to look at my dress again.

I opened the door, and the spot where the dress should have been hanging was empty. At first, I thought Mom had moved the dress. I searched the sewing room and then went and

looked in my room. The dress was nowhere to be found. My eyes started to fill with tears. I was about to go ask Mom when I had a terrible thought. I ran to James's room. *If James touched my dress ...* I thought.

I walked into James's room and couldn't believe what I saw. My beautiful dress was cut up! Pieces of violet fabric lay all over the floor and bed. Part of my dress was strung up like a tent, and inside the tent was James. I was so angry! *How could he do this to me!?* I thought. I ran down to the kitchen where Mom was cooking breakfast.

"Mom! Mom!" I yelled.

"What happened, Alicia?" Mom asked.

"James ruined my dress! It's ruined!"

I shouted, beginning to cry.

"Let me come up and see," said Mom.

When we got to James's room, Mom's expression was a mixture of anger and sadness.

"James! What were you thinking?" Mom exclaimed.





"I, uh, thought it was an old dress you were using for scraps," James said nervously. "I go in the sewing room all the time to get cloth to make stuff."

Mom sat him down and talked to him sternly.

But what about me? What would I wear?

I thought.

I decided that I would just have to wear my old black dress. I went to practice my violin piece, trying to hold back more tears. I finished my weekend homework and went to bed early, still so angry with James.

Tuesday morning, I woke up early. Next to my bed was my old black dress. Next to that, I saw something violet. I rubbed the sleep out of my eyes and looked again. There was a violet wrap made out of what used to be my beautiful dress. I realized that Mom must have used the pieces to make me a wrap.

I tried on the black dress and the wrap together. When I put it on, I felt really good. I thought, *A wrap will last longer than a dress. Sooner or later, the violet dress would have gotten too small to wear. But I can keep this wrap forever.*

I rushed down the stairs to find Mom in the kitchen. She smiled as she saw me run up to her in the black dress and violet wrap. I threw my arms around her and exclaimed, "Thank you so much, Mom! It's so pretty."

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw James sitting at the table, sadly looking down into his cereal. I went over to him and said, "James, I am really sorry for getting so angry. Can you forgive me?"

James broke out into a grin. "Only if you can

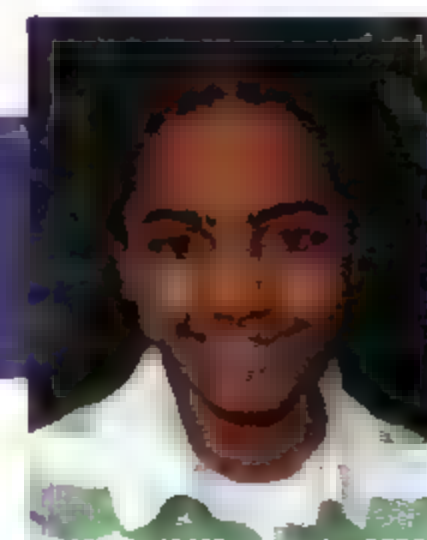
forgive me!" he said.

"Of course I can!" I replied.

I ended up putting on a great performance at the talent show—and I still have that beautiful violet wrap. ★



Meet the Author



Cary H.

I have a twin brother, so when I wrote this story, I imagined what it might be like if he were my *little* brother. We pull a lot of pranks on each other, so if he were my little brother, I'll bet he would be mischievous, just like James!

Cary, age 11, lives in Georgia.





The Dress Disaster

by Rachel H.



Liz can't believe that she is wearing the ugliest dress she's ever seen—to school.

Liz dashed through the halls of Madison Elementary. But it wasn't because she was trying to get to class on time. No, at this point, Liz didn't mind being late at all. She knew that being late would not be the thing that would make her classmates snicker when she walked into the room. *Maybe if I run, no one will be able to tell what I'm wearing,* she thought.

The dress was hideous. It was bright yellow, with a skirt that was as round as a lampshade, complete with lacy bows on the sleeves and a *teddy bear* on the front. She *hated* the dress. She was wearing it for a good reason, but that didn't make it any easier.

The previous night, Liz and her family had celebrated her birthday with her grandmother who was visiting for a few days. Liz's grandmother had given her a gift and said, "Happy birthday, Liz! I hope you like it." Liz opened the bag, hoping to see a cute, stylish outfit. But instead she saw the complete opposite. It was dread at first sight.

"Thank you, Grammy. How thoughtful!" Liz had said with her best polite smile. Liz loved her grandma and knew she meant well, but the frilly yellow dress was just not right for a girl her age. She was planning to bury it in her drawer and *never* wear it.



The next morning, just as Liz was putting together a cute outfit for school—blue long-sleeved tee, jeans, and a pink bracelet—her mother came into the room.

“Liz, it would make Grammy happy if she saw you wear the dress to school today.”

“Really funny, Mom,” Liz replied.

Liz’s mother sighed. “Please? Can you do it for Grammy?”

Liz realized that her mother was serious. She was going to have to embarrass herself in order to make her grandmother happy.

Liz slipped into the dress and looked in the mirror. It was even worse than she’d thought.

She slowly walked down the stairs, feeling the lump getting bigger in her throat with every step. Her grandmother was waiting at the bottom of the stairs. “Someone’s looking pretty cute for school!” Grammy exclaimed.

“Thanks, Grammy,” Liz said. She forced a smile and headed out the door to go to school.

As Liz entered the classroom, she felt her face get hot. She could feel the stares and hear the snickers of her fifth-grade classmates. Her best friend, Stephanie, looked concerned. Stephanie rose from her seat and approached Liz.

“What happened?” Stephanie asked, knowing that her stylish best friend would never wear a dress like that by choice.

“My grandmother—”

“I think I see where this is going,” Stephanie interrupted.

“She got me this dress for my birthday, and my mom made me wear it so that Grammy could see me wearing it to school,” Liz said.

“Wow, bummer,” said Stephanie.

That day, spelling class was awful. Liz could hear her name in whispers throughout the room, but the teacher, Ms. Jeffrey, didn’t seem to notice. She was too busy calling on students and asking them to spell words.

I hate this dress! thought Liz. And I hate wearing it to school even more! Why in the world would they make a dress like this in my size?

Suddenly, Liz heard her name. She turned her head to face Ms. Jeffrey.

“Miss Patterson! I’ve called your name three times already. Spell ‘embarrassed.’”

The whole class giggled. Liz frowned.

“E-M-B-A-R-R-A-S-E-D,” she guessed.

Ms. Jeffrey shook her head.

“You forgot the ‘s,’” she said.

Liz sighed. Wasn’t the dress embarrassing enough? However, the class was finding her spelling mistake quite amusing.

The rest of the morning did not go very well, and things were about to get worse.





Ms. Jeffrey announced to the class, “OK, everybody line up for class pictures!”

Class pictures! Oh no, thought Liz. I can’t believe I forgot! Why? Why do I have to look so silly today, my last elementary school picture day? People will still be talking about it in high school!

Liz waited in line. She wanted to get this over with.

Maybe, just maybe, she thought, my smile will look so nice that no one will pay attention to the dress when they look in the yearbook.

When it was her turn to get her picture taken, Liz gave her best smile, the kind she has when she laughs.

“Nice dress,” the photographer said after the picture.

“Uh, thanks,” Liz said. She was sure that the photographer was making fun of her, just like everyone else.

At recess, while most of the students were running around in the crisp fall breeze, Stephanie saw Liz sitting alone on a bench. Liz’s head was resting in her hands, and when Liz raised her head, Stephanie could see tears in her eyes.

Stephanie never liked to see anyone so sad, especially her best friend. She wanted to comfort Liz and see her be the happy, lively, bubbly girl that she usually was. So she sat down next to Liz and decided to give it a try.

“Hi, Steph,” Liz said softly.

“You OK?” asked Stephanie.

“Not really. If I had known it was picture day, I would have begged my mom to not make me wear this dress today. But I completely forgot! And people will keep this year’s yearbook with my picture in it as a keepsake forever. They’ll show their children my picture, and say ‘Look, that’s Liz Patterson, ‘The Dress Disaster.’”

“Your personality is all that matters, and that’s what people will remember.”

“Liz, I really don’t think that will matter to people. We all know you and know what a great person you are. You’re fun, nice, funny, smart—and you’re beautiful on the inside. Not even a not-so-pretty dress can change that! We like



you for who you are. Your personality is all that matters, and that's what people will remember. Now, c'mon, let's go enjoy the sunshine."

Liz smiled, naturally this time. Stephanie was a great friend. And she was right. Why worry? After all, it was just a picture! She hoped that her classmates would remember her for her nice qualities and not the unfortunate teddy-bear dress.

"Thanks, Steph," Liz said.

"Anytime," said Stephanie.

Six weeks later, Ms. Jeffrey handed out each student's photos before the final bell rang.

"Liz Patterson, please come and get your photos." Liz felt butterflies in her stomach as she went to the front of the room.

Liz and Stephanie walked out the doors of the school into the chilly air, about to open their envelopes with their photos inside. They'd promised each other that they would open them up together.



"One, two, three!" and the two friends ripped the photos open.

"Ha, look at me!" Stephanie laughed as she looked at her picture. Liz glanced at the photo and chuckled. Stephanie had a huge grin.

Then they looked at Liz's photo.

"Wow. Liz, you look really good," said Stephanie.

Liz had a nice, bright smile. And because the photo was taken from the shoulders up, the mortifying dress was cut completely out of the picture.

Liz said good-bye to Stephanie and rushed down the sidewalk toward her house. She couldn't wait to get home and send one of her new photos to Grammy. ★



Meet the Author



Rachel H.

Writing is one of my favorite things to do! I also love to act, and I've performed in many musicals. Acting gives me inspiration for my writing because it helps me write about the characters' emotions.

Rachel, age 13, lives in Georgia.

Honorable Mentions

Norah M.
Age 11, Massachusetts

Molly M.
Age 13, Iowa

Mallory R.
Age 13, West Virginia

Rachelle S.
Age 9, Washington

Madeleine G.
Age 10, New York

Julia S.
Age 12, Virginia

**Watch for another story
contest in an upcoming issue!**

School's

Start a school for your dolls where you're

Lunch Tray & Accessories

For a lunch tray, lay a sheet of paper on a small rectangular plastic lid. Cut or punch out a small craft-foam circle for a plate. Fold a square of tissue paper in half for a napkin.

Fresh Food

Make sure your students eat a balanced lunch. To make pretend sandwich bread, cut white foam-core board (found at craft stores) into small triangles, and glue on tan craft-foam edges for

crust. Use craft foam or tissue paper for fillings. For an apple, cut a stem and leaf from craft foam, and glue them inside a red bead. Make a mini milk carton out of paper.

In!

the teacher.

Bitty Books

Improve your doll's library by gradually adding books. To make a starter collection, cut cardboard squares. Cover each book with colorful paper. Decorate with stickers and words cut from magazines.



Bookshelves

For library bookshelves, use the base from a plastic bead box. Cover the back with paper if you'd like. Fill shelves with bitty books.



Teacher Tips

Now that you're in charge, choose some ideas for your new pretend school:

Teach math, music, and more.

If you'd like, invite a friend over to substitute teach, coach a sport, or give after-school lessons.

Set up the classroom in a small area—a corner, a closet, or a patio.

Use what you've learned in school to create more tests and assignments.

Design seating charts.
Create bulletin boards.

I ♥ School

Plan lessons.
Create tests.
Grade papers.

Hold tornado and fire drills.
Reward your students.

More cute crafts and activities can be found in *Doll School*, available in bookstores. ★



Puzzle Palooza

Candy Mix-Up

Oh no! Hannah and Allie have crashed into each other. The candy in their trick-or-treat bags has fallen out and gotten mixed together. Out of all the pieces of candy, circle the five pieces that *don't* appear more than once.



Pumpkin Pairs

Which Halloween costumes can you find if you put the pumpkins into pairs? Write your answers in the blanks below.

Not all of the pumpkins have a match.



Ha-Ha-Halloween

Using the clues listed below, see if you can figure out all of these words that begin with HA. We've done the first one for you.

1. HAPPy Halloween
2. You will need this if you are planning to go as a witch for trick-or-treating. HA__
3. If you were to see a ghost, you might stop suddenly. What is another word for this? HA__
4. You might go on HA__ rides in the fall.
5. This is something you'll wear on your head if you go as an angel for trick-or-treating. HA__
6. If you divide your candy equally with your little sister, how much will you give her? HA__
7. This is a word for the time in the fall when farmers pick pumpkins. HA_____



Witch Words?

Each word or group of words below stands for familiar words or phrases. What are they?

We've done the first one for you.

1. **covers**
Sleep

Sleep under the covers

2. **Nimidght**

3. **MOON**

4. 

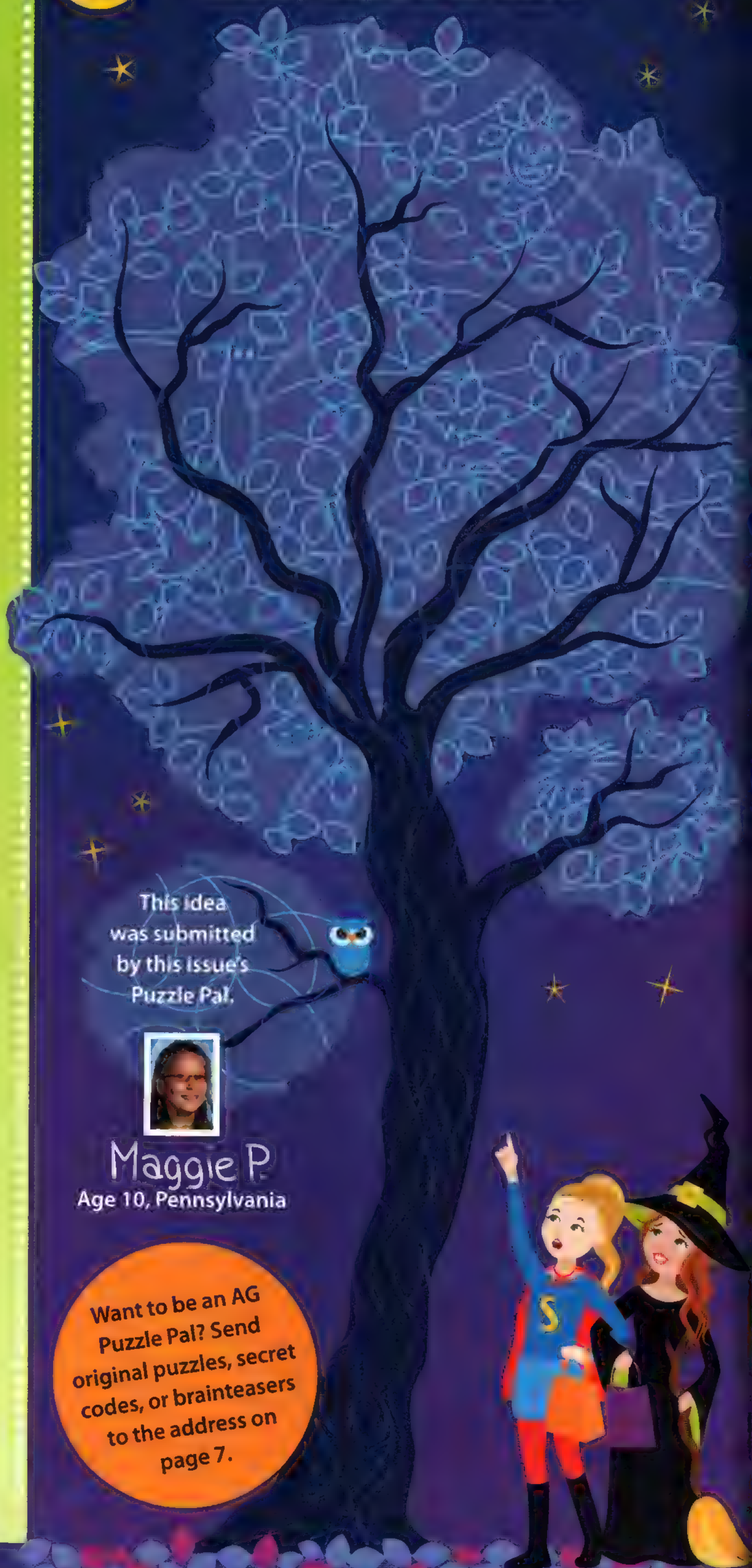
5. **CAT**

6. **KERNJACKLANT**

7. 

Tricky Tree

Look closely at this tree. Can you find 10 shadowy shapes in the leaves?





**Send your
fun photos to
the address
on page 7.**

Cheyenne and Sydney are ready to go trick-or-treating.
See if you can figure out which puzzle piece fits in the missing spot.



Neighborhood Numbers

Four of the houses in this neighborhood are missing their house numbers.
Can you crack the number code and uncover the hidden numbers?



This issue's Buzzword is...

hubbub



How to say it: HUB-ub

What it means: excited commotion

One way to use it: As Bridget and her friends were trick-or-treating, their excited shouts and giggles created quite a hubbub.

Lots of letters *almost* spell hubbub in this puzzle, but the word is spelled correctly only four times. Look forward, backward, and diagonally to find the word.

H U B B H B H H U B U B
B B H U B B U B U B H U
U B B H U H U B B U H B
H U B H U B B B H U B H
U B H B U H B U B H U B
H U B U B B H B U B U H
U H U B H U B H U B B U
B B U B B U H U B H U H
U B B H U B H H B U H B
H B U B B B H U B H U U
B B H U B U B H B H U B
H U B U H B H U B B U B

Answer Box

H U B B H B H H U B U B
B B H U B B U B U B H U
U B B H U H U B B U H B
B B U B H H U B B U H B
B U B H U H U B B U H B
U H U B H U B B U B U H
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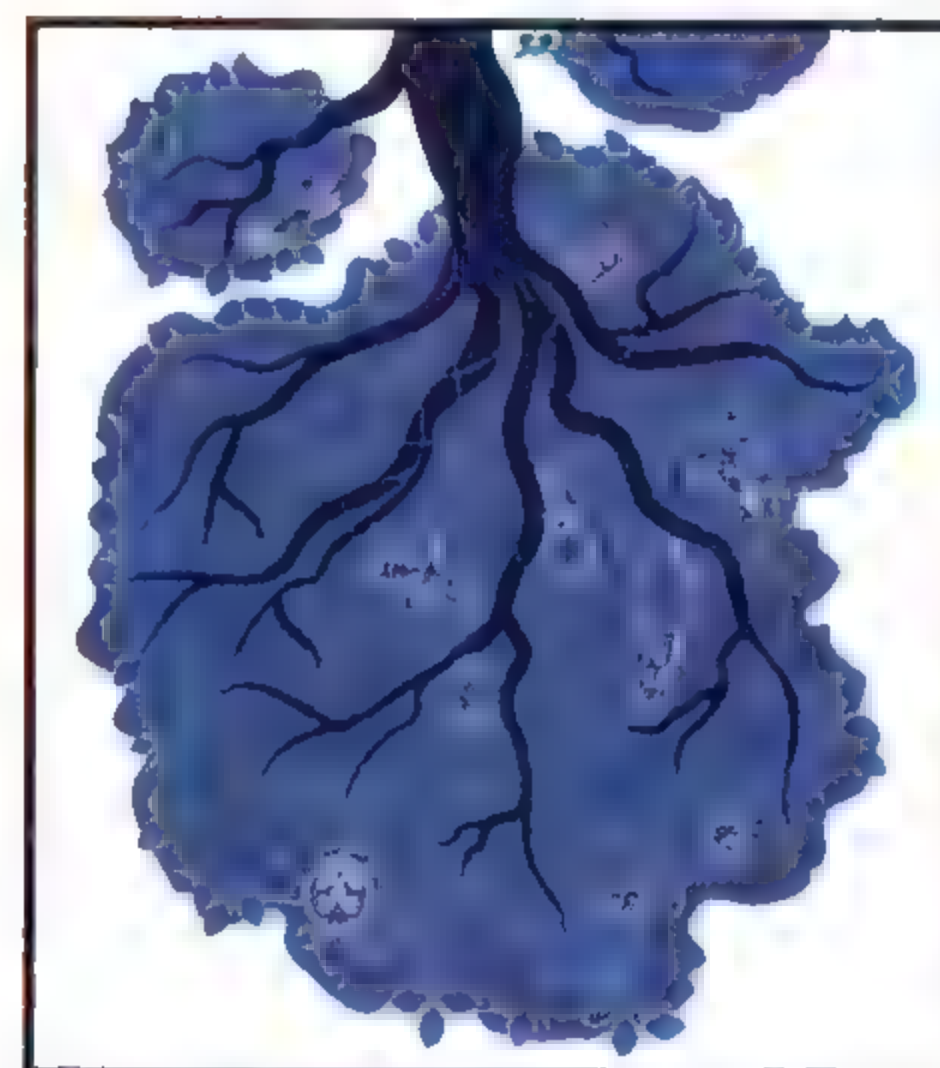
Buzzword

12, 24, 50, 104

Neighborhood Numbers

Answer: e

Photo Fun



Tricky Tree

2. midnight, 3. full moon, 4. dress up, 5. black cat, 6. jack-o-lantern, 7. candy

Witch Words?

2. hat, 3. halt, 4. hay, 5. halo, 6. half, 7. harvest

Ha-Ha-Halloween

VAMP→IRE, PRIN→CESS, COW→GIRL, KIT→TEN, PIR→ATE, MER→MAID

Pumpkin Pairs



Candy Mix-Up

Illustration: Helen Dardik



★ American Girl

Illustration: Helen Dardik



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Illustration: Helen Dardik



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BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE.



Illustration: Helen Dardik

★ American Girl

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.



Illustration: Helen Dardik

★ American Girl

FRIENDS
HELP
IN PRICKLY
SITUATIONS.



Illustration: Helen Dardik

★ American Girl

YOU ARE NEVER
TOO SMALL TO
DREAM BIG
DREAMS.



Illustration: Helen Dardik

★ American Girl

HELP!

Dear American Girl,

My sister and I are drifting apart. She's going to college, and she has new friends. We used to hang out all the time, so I'm really sad.

Missing my big sis

Your sister's life is changing, big-time. At college, she has lots of new responsibilities and interests to explore. See if you can keep in touch by phone, IM, or e-mail, and make plans to hang out when she's home on breaks. Your relationship with her is changing, too, but it's not ending. Even if you're not as close for now, you'll *always* be sisters.



Dear American Girl,

I wanted to act in the school play. When I found out that I didn't get cast, I cried in class. Plus, my best friend got a role. Now I don't know how I can show my face again at school.

Heartbroken

For starters, *act like you're doing just fine*. It might take some real acting to be happy for your friend, too, but it's the right thing to do. As for your career in theater, don't give up! Go to the next audition, and try out again. After all, not even professional actresses get all the parts they want.



Dear American Girl,

I'm always spilling things and breaking stuff. I think my mom won't let me do things because she thinks I'm irresponsible. But that's not the problem—I'm just really clumsy!

Clumsy

It's normal for girls to be clumsy as they grow up. Your brain needs time to get used to your body's new size. Show your mom that you're being careful by focusing on what you're doing, and tell her how frustrated you feel. Ask what she was like at your age, and come up with some solutions together.



Dear American Girl,

I want to serve hamburgers and cheesecake at my birthday party. But my friend is vegan, which means she won't eat anything that comes from animals. What can I do?

B-Day friend

You can respect your friend and still serve your favorites at your party. Your friend can have a veggie burger when the rest of you dig into beef, and you can offer her a piece of fruit when your cheesecake is served later. Your friend will appreciate how thoughtful you are. Have a happy birthday!



MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

I was at summer camp with a girl from my school. She's nice and fun, and we hung out at camp. But we're in different circles at school, so I'm not sure that we'll still be friends now that we're going back to school.

Camp friend

Sure, you're still friends. It just might not be the same friendship that you had at camp. Try inviting your friend over to your house to look at photos or to write a funny letter to another camp friend. Then you can see if your friendship will move beyond camp memories. You still have your other friends, so if this friendship feels forced at school, there's no need to push it. At least you'll already know someone at camp next year.



Dear American Girl,

When my mom takes me shopping, we always disagree on clothes. She wants me to wear what my sisters used to wear, but I want my own style. How can we agree?

Ask your mom what her rules are about clothing. Then share your opinion when you go shopping. Be specific! Try, "I like these jeans because they're very comfortable," or "I really don't like things that are frilly." Focus on the clothes instead of criticizing your mom's taste. If you follow her rules, you should find clothes that you both like.



Dear American Girl,

I have a friend who always eats her dessert first at lunchtime. I keep telling her to eat the right way, but she won't listen.

dessert help



Whoa—who called in the food police? Sure, most people save their desserts to enjoy last, but your friend can make her own choices about that. It's really best to back off from your friend and to focus on your own habits. Make sure that you're eating well, and leave it at that.



Dear American Girl,

My friend thinks that she's a really good singer. But she's actually kind of bad. She always asks for my opinion, so should I tell her the truth?

afraid

The truth is that you'd hurt your friend if you told her that you thought her singing was bad. Next time she wants your opinion, focus on positive things. You don't need to tell her that she's a great singer, but you can say, "You put so much emotion into your singing! I can feel it." Or ask her what kind of music she'd want to perform if she were famous. You can talk about singing and still be kind.





Dear American Girl,

I'm seriously tall. I just found out that I can't be in a ballet dance with my class because all of the dancers need to be the same height. I'm getting a different part in the show, but I want to be with my friends.

too tall

It stinks to be treated differently for something you can't control. But try not to treat this as a bad thing—instead, it could be a chance to meet new people and to try something different. You'll be back in class with all of your friends before you know it. For now, stand up tall, and dance your heart out.



Dear American Girl,

I discovered that my friend was doing something dangerous. I told an adult, and my friend got in BIG trouble. I tried to do the right thing, but now all of our other friends say I'm a tattler. They're ignoring me. new friends?

There's a difference between telling and tattling. In your heart,



you were concerned and trying to protect your friend. That doesn't make you a tattler—it makes you a brave girl and a great friend. Your other friends might not understand. They might not be mature enough to see that you were only trying to help. It's hard, but you should stand by your decision. Your friendships might change for a while, but know that there are plenty of girls out there who would love to have a friend like you.



Dear American Girl,

My mom drives a fire truck and works as a paramedic. I'm proud that she is so strong and courageous, but I get scared every time she leaves for work.

Worried about Mom

Your mom has a really important job. Her work can be dangerous at times, but your mom and her co-workers have had a lot of training in ways to stay safe. Still, tell your mom how you feel. Say, "I'm proud that you have the job you have, but I always worry that you'll get hurt. Sometimes I worry a lot." Hearing about how careful she is might make you feel better.



Advice from You

"Do you ever forget what you were about to say? When this happens to me, I just try to re-trace my thoughts, like I would re-trace my steps if I had lost something. It really seems to work!"

Maerose P.

Age 10, Massachusetts

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!

American Girl magazine

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Check out some of the colorful outfits we tried on Isis.



Design your own mini locker poster at americangirlmagazine.com. Just click on "Start the fun."



We'd love to hear what you thought about this issue! Send a letter to the address on page 7.

Behind the Scenes

American Girl hopes that you have a spooky and silly Halloween!



Caroline C., age 11

Amelia C., age 5

Laurel C., age 8

These girls from Alabama entered our Hilarious Hair contest. Click "Start the fun" at americangirlmagazine.com to see more silly hairstyle photos!



Claire B. and Gabriella M., both age 11 from California, tested these Halloween crafts for us. Nice work!



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American Girl

Coming up in the November/December issue



Winter Parfaits

Layer your favorite holiday flavors in these easy recipes!

Holiday Quiz

How willing are you to try new things?
Find out with this quiz!

Button Crafts

Easy crafts to make and give to everyone on your list

A Heartwarming Get-Together

Host a party where you help others while having fun with your friends.





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AG's Spooky Stickers

These silly Halloween stickers will make you smile.



Trick or treat!



Happy Halloween!



SPOOKY

EEK!



spooky



Trick or TREAT!

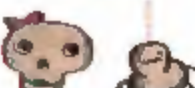
HOCUS-POCUS!



Spooky



BOO!



Happy Halloween!



Trick or treat!

EEK! spooky



Boo!

TRICK OR TREAT!

HOCUS-POCUS!



5 great ways to use these stickers:

1



Place some stickers in your assignment notebook on the date October 31.

2

Make a mini Halloween card for a friend or teacher.

3



Create cute posters to decorate your bedroom or locker.

4



Make a "Happy Halloween!" sign to hang on your front door (ask your parents first).

5



If you're having a Halloween party, use these stickers to seal the envelopes of the invitations. ✨

